

# SECRET

JERUSALEM

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SUBJECT : Jewish Agency's Report on  
 ABE Meeting in Cairo.

- The following report on the ABE's recent meeting in Cairo is taken verbatim from the Jewish Agency's Internal Report on Arab Affairs No. 1/48 dated 18 January 1948:

"The Arab Higher Executive, which recently ended its meeting in Cairo, was in session for about a fortnight. The meeting was attended by Jamil Husayni, who had just returned from America, and by Haila Ghafari, who represented his fellow-members of the A.B.E. in Jerusalem. Dr. Khalil, Ahmad Hilmi, Rafiq Tawfik, 'Imad Barakat and M'in al-Hajj were not present. Apparently the Palestine 'Administration', whose formation has been announced by the A.B.E., was one of the questions discussed, but so far there does not seem to have been any further development in this connection. Jamil Husayni has set out on a tour of the Arab capitals to win support for the A.B.E.'s project. Although it was announced that he would also visit 'Amman, it appears that our forecasts were correct, and he did not go to that town. So far no clear-cut pronouncements concerning the proposed 'Administration' have been made by any of the Arab statesmen. The statement by As'ad Dagher, of the League Secretariat, as quoted by ABE, gives the impression that the League and its member-states have already recognized the 'Administration'. However, according to the version published by 'Ahram' it appears to have been more non-committal. Nevertheless, some papers have already begun to indulge in speculation concerning the distribution of portfolios in the future Palestine Arab Government.

"The A.B.E.'s deliberations evidently centered mainly around the situation in Palestine. Haila Ghafari surveyed the position and strongly urged that large reinforcements and financial help should be sent to the country and that the general organization and military command should be overhauled. If these requirements were not met, the Arabs would be unable to continue the struggle. As far as can be ascertained, the British undertook to proffer the help requested.

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## **The Question of Establishing a Palestinian Government**

In the afternoon of February third, the Arab League Palestine Committee met, comprising the Foreign Ministers of the Arab States and their representatives, at the courtesy of the Foreign Office under the Chairmanship of His Excellency Lloyd George, with JAMIL HANNAH Bey, Ahmed HUSSEINI Pasha, Yusuf TAYSE, AIL al-MADRID, Musa IBRAHIM and Sami al-PASHA, as members. The Palestine question was then subjected for discussion. The meeting listened to the statements of Abdul Rahman ARIF, the Secretary General, and to the viewpoints of the various representatives of the Arab States. Explicit delegates suggested the formation of a governmental body in Palestine to deal with the political, military, economic and administrative affairs of the State of Palestine. This was opposed by the Transjordan delegates, supported by the Iraqi representatives, who pointed out that the establishment of a Palestinian Government is to be decided by a plebiscite of the people of Palestine and not by others. After this proposal was discussed, it was decided to adjourn. It was temporarily.

### **3. Interpretation of Testimony**

A proposal was then submitted for discussion regarding Polakowski's representation in the Arab League. The debate on this subject was developed until the session ended without result. It was decided to postpone it to the afternoon of February 2nd.

The Political Committee met at the specified date, and the discussions revealed their first line on the question of Palestine. It was decided, after the debate, to invite General Zaim al-Najaf Pasha, in his capacity as Commander of the Palestine Army of Liberation, who was in exile upon the invitation of the League's Executive, to command the liberation in Palestine. Even the Political and Military Committees. The Political Committee found, after the General made his statements, that there were understood problems creating differences of opinion among the members of the Palestine Arab Higher Committee, the representation of which would weaken and harm the Palestine cause. It was then unanimously decided to alter the atmosphere among the members of this body. It was also unanimously decided, upon the proposal of the Syrian Government (and thanks to the experience, understanding and diplomacy of Hiyatallah), to accept Palestine's representation at the meetings of the League's Executive and its committees, because such a measure would remove misunderstandings, coordinate the efforts of the Arab countries, and strengthen their political vis-a-vis international position.

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4. Differences in the Arab of Palestine's Representations

The differences appeared among the members of the Political Committee when they discussed the issue of the proposed Committee on the Arab of Palestine to the League Council. The Trans-Jordanian delegation expressed opposition to and counterbalanced the objection of Hajj Amin al-Husseini as representative of Palestine. It was supported by Iraqi delegates. The intervention of Hajj Amin al-Husseini at the Committee, in this matter prevented the development of the differences among the members of the Political Committee. Thanks to SEITZ's diplomacy, the issue of the differences was extinguished and the members of the Trans-Jordanian and Iraqi delegations were satisfied, and they returned their opposition to the acceptance of the Arab. The meeting was then adjourned.

5. Differences of the Members of the Arab Higher Committee

It seems that the differences among the members of the Political Committee on the Arab's candidacy about to be settled when the Committee appeared among the members of the Political Arab Higher Committee itself on the recommendation of the Arab Higher Committee. The differences in the view of the representative for Palestine. The differences became clearly evident. After two consecutive meetings of the Political Committee to settle these differences, the Committee was able, by dint of Hajj Amin al-Husseini's diplomacy, to find a settlement acceptable to the members of the Arab Higher Committee. Thereupon the Political Committee adopted a recommendation for accepting the representation of Palestine at the meetings of Arab League Council, provided that the Palestinian delegation be composed of Hajj Amin al-Husseini, Jamil al-Husseini and Mu'in al-Husseini.

6. Palestinian Government or the Political Committee of the Arab League

During the subsequent meeting of the Political Committee, discussions were resumed on the creation of a governmental body for Palestine, or a provisional body to supervise various Palestinian affairs until the establishment of a Palestinian Government becomes possible in the full sense of the word. After debating this subject, Hajj Amin suggested that the Political Committee of the Arab League have the right to supervise various Palestinian affairs and be regarded as the sole body responsible for everything relating to the Palestinian question. His proposal was accepted unanimously. The Committee passed a resolution in this respect and the meeting was then adjourned.

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# 7. Military Committee for Palestine

The Political Committee met on the following day and discussed military matters connected with the Palestine question. General Imail SAYFAT Pasha was asked to attend and give his military views, such as the unification of the body which would take charge of arms importation, supervising the volunteer movement, and help provision the Army of Liberation. After listening to General SAYFAT's statements, it was decided, upon the proposal of Syria's delegate and following its discussion, to form a semi-regular army from volunteers released from regular forces of the Arab countries, provided that the general command be entrusted to General Imail SAYFAT. He also proposed the creation of a committee, to be called the Military Committee, to be formed from military bodies representing the various Arab countries, to be attached to the Political Committee and to submit all its decisions to that Committee. All the members approved this proposal, except that the Saudi Arabian delegate regretted that his country could not send a representative to the Committee. His excuse was accepted and the Political Committee adopted a resolution on these recommendations.

# 8. Members of the Military Committee

The Military Committee was formed of General Imail SAYFAT Pasha representing Iraq, Subhi al-KHALBI representing Palestine, Commander Shamsi al-DIN representing the Lebanon, and Yusef KHAL Pasha or whoever is delegated by the Egyptian Chief of Staff representing Egypt. General Abd-al-Qadir al-JABRI representing Transjordan. This Committee is to meet in one of the Arab capitals under the chairmanship of AZHAR Pasha or his representative when it is found necessary to coordinate all Palestinian affairs.

# 9. Syria to buy arms from Czechoslovakia

During the subsequent meetings of the Political Committee, the recommendations of the Military Committee for providing arms for the Palestine Army of Liberation and the places from which such arms could be obtained were discussed.

These recommendations revealed that it was possible to obtain various types of weapons from Czechoslovakia, which had offered large quantities of various types of arms. But the Czechoslovakian factories cannot effect the transactions unless a legal government represents the importing country. After exchanging views on this matter, the delegate of the Syrian Government proposed that the Syrian Government would conclude contracts with the Czechoslovakian parties for obtaining the arms and ammunition necessary for the Palestine Army of Liberation in the name of the Syrian Government. This proposal was unanimously adopted and the Committee adopted a resolution therefor.

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10. Facilitating the Smuggling of Arms into Palestine

After a discussion of the Military Committee's recommendations, the Arab delegates made a proposal concerning the necessity for all the Arab countries and their governments to take measures facilitating the delivery of various types of arms to Palestine and to the Army of Liberation. It was unanimously decided to accept this proposal and a resolution was adopted therefor.

11. The Question of Confederations and the Lebanese Government

The question of confederations and assistance to Palestine was referred to the Political Committee for discussion. After this question was discussed, the members of the Committee found out that the only country which did its duty toward Palestine and to the Arab League Council from the standpoint of confederations and the payment of its share to the League was the Lebanese Government. The Committee then adopted a resolution to the effect that the Arab League Council take the necessary decision urging each Arab country which is a member of the League to do its duty to Palestine and to the League Council.

12. Activities of the General Assembly of the League Council

When the Political Committee discussed the meetings, the League Council held a second session during which the decisions of the Political Committee were submitted for discussion; the Council finally decided the following:

III. Palestine's Representation in the League's Council

It was decided to accept the representation of Palestine in the meetings of the Arab League Council and to convey this decision to the Palestine Arab Higher Committee; provided that the Palestine delegation shall have the right to join the debates of the League Council without the right to vote on the decisions taken therein.

Following this decision and its transmission to the Arab Higher Committee, the Palestinian delegation was immediately formed with Hajj Amin al-Husseini as President, and Ismail al-Samirah, Dr. 'In al-Khatib, Sa'iq al-Sayid, 'Abdo al-Sayid as members. The delegates then entered the meeting hall and as soon as the Palestinian delegates took their seats, Hajj Amin, the Chairman of the Council, made a speech welcoming the Arab League and the members of the Palestinian delegation in reference to the high aims which the Arab League was endeavoring to obtain for maintaining

the Arabism and independence of Palestine. Haj Amin asserted his standing the Arab League for the continued efforts and for its assistance to the Arabs of Palestine.

**III. The Abandonment of the Formation of a Palestine Government**

The Council decided to abandon the creation of a Palestine Government and to request the Political Committee of the Arab League as temporarily acting in the place of such a Government. Thus it will represent Palestine and will be solely responsible for decisions relating to the Palestine question until it becomes possible to establish a Government chosen by the people of Palestine.

**IV. Military Committee**

The formation of a Military Committee for Palestine was decided upon, comprising military representatives from all the Arab countries, to operate together with the Political Committee and to refer its decisions to the Joint Military Committee.

**V. Eviction of Jews from Greater Jerusalem**

It was decided to purchase arms and ammunition needed by the Palestinian Army of Liberation from Greater Jerusalem, provided that the transactions would be effected in the name of the Syrian Government.

**VI. Expelling the Committee of Jews into Palestine**

The recommendations of the Military Committee for finally halting the smuggling of arms and ammunition to the Palestinian Army of Liberation from the various Arab countries were approved.

**15. International Assistance**

After completing the decisions on the recommendations of the Political Committee there was submitted for discussion the question of concluding petroleum agreements and economic treaties concluded between the Arab countries and the powers supporting the partition of Palestine. A sharp debate ensued on this subject, during which the Palestinian delegation urged the necessity of taking a unanimous decision on this matter, because it would shape the partition plan.

King Ibn Saud's delegate opposed this motion and referred to

his previous stand on this proposal, citing the economic injuries from which his country would suffer, and because His Majesty King Ibn Saud feels that the American companies have nothing to do with political matters. He said that there were Arab countries which have not abrogated their economic and petroleum treaties with the powers supporting partition. He demanded that these powers take the initiative. He was supported by the delegate of the Syrian Government who proposed that it was the right of Saudi Arabia to cancel any concessions given to American companies on the basis of the principle adopted at the Havana Conference. The Saudi Arabian delegate, however, opposed this proposal and no decision was therefore taken thereon. In this connection, the Syrian delegate suggested that no economic or petroleum agreement be signed with any foreign country supporting partition from now on. This proposal was then unanimously adopted.

#### 14. Resolving Attitude toward America

Here the Syrian delegate deemed it advisable to propose the adoption of a negative attitude toward American petroleum and economic interests in the various Arab countries until the American Government changes its attitude towards partition, provided that the Arab countries implement this decision from the date of its adoption, and that this be recommended to League member states. The Council unanimously decided upon the adoption of this proposal and its endorsement to those concerned after it was debated and supported by the representatives of Iraq, Transjordan and Palestine.

#### 15. Smiling

At the request of the Lebanese delegate, the question of Smiling was then submitted for discussion as well as that of the construction of pipelines across Transjordan or Egypt in the event the Syrian Government refuses to permit the passage of pipelines through its territories.

After debating this proposal, the Council adopted a unanimous resolution providing that the Arab states adhere to one policy towards petroleum matters, especially towards this company. This project should not be discussed nor accepted prior to receiving the approval of all the Arab countries unless the American Government ceases its support for partition. In this last event, the Syrian and Lebanese Governments would have the right to benefit from the passage of the aforementioned oil pipelines through their territories.

**26. The Volunteering of Refugees in the Palestine Army of Liberation**

The proposal of the Palestine delegation was then submitted which provides for the acceptance of foreign volunteers in the Arab Army of Liberation. After a brief debate, this proposal was unanimously adopted. The meeting was then adjourned to resume later for the purpose of considering the recommendations which might be received by the Secretariat.

**27. Recommendations of Cultural Committee to League Council**

On February 28, the League Council reconvened at the summons of the Egyptian Foreign Office. At the opening of the session, Elia Inoullouy, the Chairman of the Council, announced the death of His Majesty Imam YAKA, King of Yemen. He said: "With deep regret I announce to you the death of His Majesty, the King of Yemen. I can but mention the Imam's strong faith and Arab pride. He struggled and fought against every foreigner who wanted to conquer and exploit his country. He resisted all the forces which gathered against him, thus saving the Arabian of this part of the Arab world." Elia Inoullouy then concluded his eulogy by saying that the Council's meeting be suspended five minutes in His Majesty's memory. Thereupon, Ali al-IBRAHIM, the Imam's delegate, thanked the Council for the sentiments towards the Imam and towards the departed sovereign. This was followed by the submission to the Council of the recommendations of the Cultural Committee, the aims of which are as follows:

**III. Declaration of Guidelines for the Arab League, etc.**

The Council decided to approve the decisions of the Cultural Committee which aim at unifying the standards for the Arab language, history, geography, and archaeology.

**IV. Arab Iron Committee**

The Council adopted the idea of establishing a company for Arab iron and of attempting to secure the success.

**V. Arab Railway**

The Council also looked into the question of refugees from all over the world and referred it to the member states for study, provided that the results of such study be submitted at the next session of the League.



# **IXB. General Considerations**

The Council agreed the question of general considerations with the provision that this be resolved within the limits explained to the representatives of the League States at the.

## **IXB. Discretion of the Council**

The Council deemed it advisable to refer this recommendation to the League's Secretariat General with the hope of studying it with technical experts and in the light of the pertinent reports.

## **IXC. Recommendations of the Palestine Committee**

### **1. Tax for the Protection of Palestine**

The Council decided to refer the Committee's recommendation for the imposition of a tax for the protection of Palestine to the member States, so that each one of them may implement this recommendation.

### **2. Further Considerations for the Aid of Palestine**

The Council heard the Committee's decision which urged the Arab Government to supervise popular contributions collected in their countries for the aid of Palestine and to give them the proper direction. All such contributions must be restricted to the Palestine aid fund in the Secretariat General, and the use must be subject to the rules governing the use of other funds allocated for the assistance of Palestine. Contributions made for special purposes will be credited to a special account which will be opened by the Secretariat General.

## **3. The Question of Loans**

The Council adopted the recommendation of the Palestine Committee concerning the former resolutions for the unity of the three parts (Iraq, Syria, Transjordan) of Syria, the complete independence and for the formation of a committee by the Secretariat General to submit a memorandum to the Investigating Committee embodying the League's views.

## **4. The Question of the Budget**

(Please Note: This probably refers to all French North Africa, not just Morocco.)

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The Gemelli expressed his regret because the present controlling the world have not taken positive steps toward recognizing the rights of the people of the Maghrib. It also expressed regret over the bloody incidents which took place from time to time. The Gemelli will endeavor to help them in realizing their aims, to attend every possible audience and to appropriate adequate sum for conducting the famine in those parts.

**21. The Press**

The Gemelli decided that the Government adopt the necessary legislation and administrative measures to prevent the publication of news on the defense of Palestine in the press, except those announced by the appropriate authorities.

**22. Amalgamation of East Arab League Section**

The Emallamy, the Chairman of the Gemelli, then announced the conclusion of the seventh ordinary term during which the Gemelli presented most of the chapters with courage and energy. The Emallamy declared:

"While each term has its characteristics, this session has been associated with the name of Palestine, which is dear to every Arab heart, and for which many and men will be sacrificed. The Arabs will not permit Palestine to be a mere Arab League. The Arab committee have prepared after the passage of the five months since the opening of this term, that they are vigilant and that they do what they say. I say with pride that the world is beginning to feel the results of our activities and the decisions which we have adopted and are implementing."

The Emallamy thanked the members of the Arab delegation and their heads for their efforts on behalf of higher Arab interests. In the name of the Gemelli, the Emallamy then thanked the King the Government, and the people of Egypt. He also thanked the Secretary of the League who has accompanied his intelligence, knowledge and energy to the relations which the League entertains to him, and the Secretariat staff, who have proved that they are worthy of the confidence of the League and the Arab states.

He concluded his speech by saying:

"I hope that the eighth term will realize Arab aspirations and witness the day in which our aspirations will be fully materialized."

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His Excellency was escorted by the Secretary of the League and by Hajj Amin al-Husseini, both of whom thanked the Arab League for its stand and its efforts for saving Palestine.

Notes: (probably by Textree after talking with source)

1. Hajd SOUD completely dominated the situation during this team meeting which Abdul Rahman HIZAN, the Secretary General, accepted as a determined person, in contrast to his behavior during the past terms.
2. The Hadd's personality proved, during the Council's meetings to those who did not know him closely and who thought he was a simple, that it is copy and more flexible than real. Hajd SOUD criticized him frequently and almost disapproved him.
3. Almost all the Arab countries in Cairo registered with the Lebanon in the dispute with the Syrian Government, and supported its stand, particularly as Jamil HADAD, the Syrian President, refused to raise the question of the differences during the discussions of the League Council.
4. The Transjordanian and Iraqi delegates were able in agreement with the Hashemite of the other Arab countries than the former Transjordanian and Iraqi delegates.
5. The British Intelligence Service was noticeably active in connection with the various Arab delegations, as most of the Service's officials met with each Arab delegation more than once.

# THEIR WORK IN THE

Note under three above sounds unlikely, and in connection with note number five, it was to be pointed out that the Arabs (last group) is a British official (and private citizen too) for that matter) is a member of the "Intelligence Service" - which has virtually become an Arab word.

Personnel requested that we give him a copy to transmit directly to the State Department in Washington with his comments. He compiled after meeting with the Intelligence, each name, and note of the end of report. He hope this has your approval.

## DISCUSSION

Washington

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